

## 2023 Legislative Session Issue Brief

# Adult Basic Education and Early Childhood Education teachers

### We can't continue to leave some educators out

All of our educators—including those who work with our youngest students and adult learners—are dedicated professionals who strive to see all students succeed.

Early Childhood Family Education (ECFE) is an interactive, educational program model for all families in Minnesota with children between the ages of birth and kindergarten. These programs recognize that parents are a child's first and most important teachers and offer parents hands-on learning tools and experiences that help build strong families.

Adult Basic Education (ABE) programs' mission is to provide adults with education opportunities to acquire and improve their literacy skills necessary to become self-sufficient and to participate effectively as productive workers, family members and citizens. This is particularly vital in a tight labor market.

Since 2017, ECFE and ABE teachers are fully licensed educators under state law. However, even though they are licensed and teaching side by side with K-12 educators, licensed ECFE and ABE teachers do not have access to the same protections as their colleagues.

### Education Minnesota supports changing Minnesota law so ECFE and ABE positions are covered under the continuing contract law and Teacher Tenure Act.


This ensures our ECFE and ABE teachers receive due process protections. It also means they have to follow the requirements of the Teacher Development and Evaluation law. It's time to make sure these educators are on the same playing field as their peers.

#### What does that mean?

- Due process protections, often called "tenure," are earned by Minnesota Tier 3 and 4 licensed teachers after they have completed a three-year probationary period and have had no less than three evaluations per probationary year.
- Tenured teachers can be fired for specific reasons, including insubordination, set forth in state law and the tenure law provides them the right to challenge those reasons in a hearing.
- Tenure laws protect teachers who speak out honestly about the learning conditions in their schools and advocate for their students. They are what assures parents and the public they are getting the real story at conferences or PTA meetings. These laws are an educator's First Amendment. They help provide the public with information to hold policymakers accountable for their decisions.
- Tenure laws also protect against discrimination and bias, which can be important when trying to recruit more people of color into the profession. They also protect teachers who teach difficult subject matter.

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Education Minnesota is an affiliate of the American Federation of Teachers, the National Education Association and AFL-CIO.  3387



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